

edward johnson building  
faculty of music  
university of toronto



AN EVENING WITH OSKAR

A CELEBRATION OF OSKAR MORAWETZ' BIRTHDAY

JEANNE BAXTRESSER, flute  
VICTOR DANCHENKO, violin  
THE GOLDEN BRASS QUINTET OF TORONTO (Faculty Students)  
OSKAR MORAWETZ, piano  
ORFORD STRING QUARTET  
PATRICIA PARR, piano  
MARK PEDROTTI, baritone

WALTER HALL

SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 1982

8 PM

This "Evening with Oskar" marks the composer's 65th year, his 42nd in Canada and almost a quarter of a century as professor of composition at the University of Toronto. After arriving in Canada in 1940 Oskar Morawetz, who was born in Czechoslovakia, quickly established himself as a leading composer and since that time his works have been given in hundreds of concerts around the world. Among his most important works two in particular stand out; the Sinfonietta for Winds and Percussion which won the coveted Critic's Award in 1966 at the international competition for contemporary music in Italy, and From the Diary of Anne Frank, designated as "the most important contribution to Jewish culture and music in Canada" by the Segal Fund of Montreal.

Those who measure a composer's worth by the novelty of his techniques or the difficulty of his musical language will call Morawetz a conservative composer -- a description with which he will readily agree. Deeply suspicious of many twentieth-century compositional fads and openly contemptuous of what he regards as the lunatic fringe of his profession he takes his relationship with his audience seriously and believes that it is the composer's duty to communicate. It is not surprising that he is also doubtful of the value of program notes; it is almost as if it were a criticism of his music that anything in it should need further explanation.

#### PROGRAM

##### Sonata for Flute and Piano

Allegretto

Adagio sostenuto

Allegro non troppo

JEANNE BAXTRESSER, flute; PATRICIA PARR, piano



This sonata was commissioned by tonight's performer, Jeanne Baxtresser, who gave the first performance in August, 1980. The first movement is in ternary form but the recapitulation of the opening themes employs new textures and colours. The slow movement forms the emotional heart of the work. It opens with the two instruments in contrasting moods -- the piano boldly assertive with a strong chordal theme, the flute almost tentative and only gradually gaining strength. The last movement is a free sonata with a development based exclusively on the first theme.

#### Sonata for Brass Quintet

Allegro moderato

Andante moderato

Allegro

#### THE GOLDEN BRASS QUINTET OF TORONTO

This work was commissioned by the Composers, Authors and Publishers Association of Canada and received its first performance in Bonn, West Germany, where it was played by the Canadian Brass. In November of last year it was given in a program on the PBS television network by faculty members of the University of Madison and in the current season it is to be performed by five other groups, including the New York Brass Quintet.

Sonata No.2 for Violin and Piano

Adagio -- leading without a break into  
Poco allegro

VICTOR DANCHENKO, violin; PATRICIA PARR, piano

This composition, the composer's third for this particular combination of instruments, began life as "Two Preludes for Violin and Piano", in which form it was given its first performance in Australia in 1969. During the last two years the composer has reworked these preludes as a two-movement sonata in which form this work is receiving its first performance tonight. The first movement is slow and expressive with the violin treated almost as a solo instrument. The second movement is a perpetuum mobile of considerable dramatic tension.

-- INTERMISSION --

String Quartet No.2

Allegro energico  
Adagio  
Allegro vivace

ORFORD STRING QUARTET

This quartet was written between 1951 and 1953 and was given its first performance by the Parlow Quartet.

The first movement is a free sonata form with a tense, dramatic development section. The tragic mood of the second movement came to the composer's mind while watching a film depicting the desolation resulting from World War II.



This mood is especially noticeable in the dirge-like sections which follow the introduction, and is only relaxed slightly in the middle of the movement. The climax, however, returns to the opening mood and the trills which follow are spaced according to the composer, to produce the effect of drum rolls. The last section of this movement seems resigned to the tragedies of war as it brings back the funeral march, but in a more relaxed manner. The third movement, an exciting allegro molto, is twice interrupted by a slow section which reminds us of the previous movement (although it uses new thematic material). The work closes with a Prestissimo coda.

#### Five Songs for Baritone and Piano

MARK PEDROTTI, baritone; OSKAR MORAWETZ, piano

In the song To the Ottawa River (Archibald Lampman) the piano part portrays the slow movement of a large river which is exploited by men "to turn the saws and hammers of a hundred mills" and later the noise of water falling over chutes and cataracts, oblivious of men's greed for gold.

In Elegy (Anne Wilkinson) the poet pours out the unhappiness of her life: "I am so tired I do not think that sleep in death can rest me." She has a premonition of early death and sees her own casket carried to the grave. "Do not let the children pass my way alone lest these shaking bones rattle out their fright at waking in the night."

Grenadier (A.E. Housman) is a bitter reproach against the Queen by whose command a young man is recruited into the army for thirteen pence a day. He is shot and while dying feels his blood running away and sees the sergeant recruiting new soldiers to take his place.

The Chimney Sweeper (William Blake) is an allegory of the social inequality between the poor and those who pray in church yet completely ignore the misery of their fellow men. There is a particularly moving climax in the song at the words "And because I am happy and dance and sing, they think they have done me no injury, and are gone to praise God and his Priests and King, who make a heaven of our misery."

Mad Song (William Blake) describes one whose grief is stilled only in sleep; by day he is persecuted by all kinds of imaginary dangers. The piano part colours his madness in a steady, rising crescendo and continues its furiously climbing line even after the final exclamation: "I turn my back to the east, for light doth seize my brain with frantic pain."

-- John Mayo and the Composer

Orford String Quartet

Andrew Dawes, first violin  
Kenneth Perkins, second violin  
Terence Helmer, viola  
Denis Brott, cello

The Golden Brass Quintet of Toronto

Norman Garcia, Robert Venables, trumpets  
Geoffrey Leader, horn  
Susan Dustan, trombone  
Salvatore Fratia, tuba

Next Concert: University of Toronto Symphony Orchestra  
Saturday, January 23, 1982  
8 pm, MacMillan Theatre